

in the language to keep together in the field of literature the mind of a people which is politically divided

between five administrations.

Throughout the centuries there has been a steady and persistent effort on the part of the leaders in the country to educate the people. It is usual to say that Hinduism made knowledge a sealed book to the people.

Certain types of knowledge were no doubt reserved

for acquisition by the higher classes. This reservation

later assumed the form of a privilege but it is not

clear that it began by way of one. The study of the

Vedas was said to be the Brahman's duty. The

classes which were assigned other duties and could not

sit down to this work were given the essential parts

of knowledge in forms in which it could be easily

assimilated. This at any rate is the impression created

by the religious history of the Karnataka.

Sankaracharya gave the essentials of his religious

teaching in the many verses and prayers which he wrote

for the people. Ramanujacharya converted large masses

of people to his creed of devotion. Basavanna introduced

the principle of expressing the best thoughts

in the vernacular of the people. He instituted or

revived the order of the Jangama or poor priest to

convey knowledge to the people. The Haridasa

movement put the finest thoughts of the devotional

school into popular song and took them

from door
to door. The same time saw the
beginning of a
popular movement in literature. Writers
developed
vernacular metres for narrating religious
stories and
placed a combination of poetry, religion
and philos-
ophy within reach of the commonest people
in language